



Ted Powell... "We need the supporters behind us tomorrow against Reading."

The supporters can help us — Powell

TED POWELL, who took on a mammoth job in replacing the successful Brian Lee as manager of Wycombe Wanderers this season, stands on the threshold of a major achievement when his side takes the field against Reading tomorrow.

If the Blues can get through to the third round it will be a magnificent feat for Powell, in only his third year of management. So far he has guided Wycombe to top position in the Rothmans Isthmian League — but a place in round three would be almost miraculous. After all, it took Wanderers 90 years to get there last time.

Ted, an England amateur international and captain of his country, has played two games against Football League opposition during his illustrious career as a player. But both games ended in disappointment.

First occasion was in 1964 when Sutton United were drawn at home to Aldershot in the first round proper. Sutton lost 4-1 and Ted admits the experience was not particularly pleasant. Four years later Sutton drew a plum home tie with mighty Leeds United but again there was to be no success for Ted as his team were put firmly in their place to the tune of 6-0. Ted remembers: "Leeds were a very good side and full of experience. I was disappointed by our display as we didn't raise our game and just played as normal."

WHAT CHANCE?

So it is with those somewhat disappointing memories behind him that

Ted sends his team out against Reading tomorrow. So how does he rate Wycombe's chances?

Ted feels that his side's biggest problem will be off the field. He, like many others, is worried by the general overconfidence of the Wycombe public, many of whom feel that the game is all over bar the shouting.

"If the supporters urge us on, I'm sure we have a chance. But it is going to be a very difficult game for us and we need all the support the fans can give us," says Ted.

As Reading have been away from home (at Tranmere) and then had their game on Saturday called off, Ted has been unable to make his usual careful study of the opposition. "I would have liked to have seen them in action but that won't have much effect on Wycombe's display. John Reardon, Alan Phillips and myself all know a fair bit about Reading and some friends in professional football have told me about them."

Ted feels Reading's front three forwards are the real danger men and singles out Robin Friday as a major threat. But the manager is more than happy about his mid-field three which, he feels, is second to none in the Isthmian League. Of the defence, he says: "The back four have done exceptionally well over the last six

games, especially Alan Phillips and Keith Mead. Only four goals conceded in our last ten games speaks for itself."

UNSETTLED

Powell points out that Reading have been unable to field a settled team in recent weeks, which he thinks might indicate the club is not happy at the moment.

Over the years in the non-league game Ted has had a good chance to judge the differing standard between the part time and full time game.

"The gap between the two has reduced a lot in recent years. Many players I know could easily have gone professional but they are better off in the non-league game."

NO SURPRISE

"Some non-league clubs are better organised than league clubs and it's no surprise that the non-league clubs do well in the F.A. Cup. They are all well organised and if they can play 10 per cent above their best against a pro' team who are slightly off form, they are bound to do well."

"The top six clubs in the Rothmans Isthmian League could hold their own in the Fourth Division, certainly, if they had the amount of time the pro' clubs enjoy."

It is that sort of confidence and belief that will stand the Blues in good stead tomorrow. As Ted puts it: "If we go out and play, and put them under pressure, we are in with a chance."